

**Consideration for recommendation of amendments to 312 IAC 9-7-6 governing the taking of smallmouth bass in designated waters and largemouth bass in Big Lake and Crane Lake in Noble County by sport anglers; Administrative Cause #10-154D**

The Division of Fish and Wildlife is proposing the administrative rule changes listed below to provide additional protection of smallmouth bass in selected waters in Indiana. These proposed changes are in response to public concerns regarding harvest pressure on smallmouth bass through the NRC Comprehensive Rule Enhancement Project.

Currently, there is a 5 fish bag limit for black bass taken in rivers, and a minimum size limit of 12 inches (with a few exceptions). The proposal is to continue to allow an individual to take or possess no more than five (5) black bass (largemouth, smallmouth and spotted bass) in aggregate per day, but allow only the harvest of black bass that are less than 12 inches long or more than 15 inches long with no more than 2 per day to be taken that are 15 inches in length or more from the following rivers:

- (1) Blue River located in Crawford, Harrison, and Washington counties. Each black bass taken from the Blue River in Crawford, Harrison, and Washington counties must be less than twelve (12) inches long or more than fifteen (15) inches long.
- (2) West Fork White River located in Randolph, Delaware, Madison, Hamilton, Marion, Morgan Counties.
- (3) West Fork Whitewater River, East Fork Whitewater River from the junction with the West Fork Whitewater River to the Brookville Lake dam (the tailwater), and the Whitewater River from the forks to the Indiana-Ohio state line located in Randolph, Wayne, Fayette, Franklin, and Dearborn Counties (*this excludes the East Fork of the Whitewater above the dam from the regulation except for the tailwater portion*);
- (4) Flatrock River (entire length to the confluence with the Driftwood River) located in Henry, Rush, Decatur, Shelby, and Bartholomew Counties.
- (5) Big Blue River and Driftwood River (entire length that starts at the confluence of the Big Blue and Sugar Creek) located in Henry, Rush, Hancock, Shelby, Johnson, and Bartholomew Counties.
- (6) Tippecanoe River located in Tippecanoe, White, Carroll, Pulaski, Starke, Fulton, Marshall, and Kosciusco counties to the water level control structure at Lake Tippecanoe.
- (7) Eel River located in Cass, Miami and Wabash Counties.
- (8) St. Joseph River located in St. Joseph and Elkhart counties.
- (9) Pigeon River and Pigeon Creek located in LaGrange and Steuben counties from the Indiana -Michigan Stateline upstream to the outlet of Hogback Lake.
- (10) Elkhart River located in Elkhart County from the confluence of the St. Joseph River upstream to the Goshen Dam in Goshen, Indiana.

Additionally, the DNR is proposing an experimental “reverse” slot-limit on largemouth bass at Big and Crane lakes in Noble county to reduce the excessive number of small bass and improve the quality of bass fishing at both of these lakes. Reducing the number of bass less than 14 inches long in Big and Crane lakes will allow for increased growth of those that remain, improve their size, boost angler catches of bass larger than 14 inches, and increase angler satisfaction with bass fishing quality. Reducing the overall abundance of largemouth bass could lead to an increase in numbers of bluegills due to less predation by bass but is not likely to cause a significant change in bluegill fishing quality.

## TITLE 312 NATURAL RESOURCES COMISSION

### **Proposed Rule** LSA Document #10-

#### DIGEST

Amends 312 IAC 9-7-6 to add a size limit for black bass taken from additional locations.  
Effective thirty days after filing with the Publisher.

### **312 IAC 9-7-6**

SECTION 1. 312 IAC 10-7-6 IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS:

#### **312 IAC 9-7-6 Black bass**

Authority: IC 14-10-2-4; IC 14-22-2-6

Affected: IC 14-22

Sec. 6. (a) Except as otherwise provided in this section, an individual may take or possess not more than five (5) black bass in aggregate per day.

(b) An individual may take or possess not more than three (3) black bass from Lake Michigan in aggregate per day. An individual must not possess more than three (3) black bass in aggregate while fishing in or on Lake Michigan.

(c) Except as otherwise provided in this section, an individual must not take or possess a black bass except as follows:

- (1) the black bass is **at least** twelve (12) inches if taken from rivers or streams; or
- (2) the black bass is **at least** fourteen (14) inches if taken from lakes or reservoirs (including Lake Michigan).

(d) An individual may take or possess largemouth bass of any length in the following lakes:

- (1) Brownstown Pit in Jackson County.
- (2) Burdette Park Lakes in Vanderburgh County.
- (3) Chandler Town Lake in Warrick County.
- (4) Cypress Lake in Jackson County.
- (5) Deming Park Lakes in Vigo County.
- (6) Garvin Park Lake in Vanderburgh County.
- (7) Glen Miller Pond in Wayne County.
- (8) Hayswood Lake in Harrison County.
- (9) Henry County Memorial Park Lake in Henry County.
- (10) Hovey Lake in Posey County.
- (11) Krannert Lake in Marion County.
- (12) Lake Sullivan in Marion County.
- (13) Ruster Lake in Marion County.
- (14) Schnebelt Pond in Dearborn County.

(e) An individual must not take or possess a largemouth bass unless the largemouth bass is less than twelve (12) inches long or more than fifteen (15) inches long from the following designated lakes:

- (1) Buffalo Trace Lake in Harrison County.
- (2) Celina Lake in Perry County.
- (3) Indian Lake in Perry County.
- (4) Saddle Lake in Perry County.

- (5) Scales Lake in Warrick County.
- (6) Shakamak State Park Lakes in Clay County, Greene County, and Sullivan County.
- (7) Tipsaw Lake in Perry County.
- (8) Ferdinand State Forest Lake in Dubois County.
- (9) Montgomery City Park Lake in Daviess County.
- (f) An individual may take or possess not more than one (1) largemouth bass from Turtle Creek Reservoir in Sullivan County. An individual must not take or possess a largemouth bass from Turtle Creek Reservoir unless the largemouth bass is at least twenty (20) inches long.
- (g) An individual may take or possess not more than five (5) largemouth bass in aggregate per day from Patoka Lake in Orange, Crawford, and Dubois counties or Dogwood Lake in Daviess County. An individual must not take or possess a largemouth bass from Patoka Lake or Dogwood Lake unless the largemouth bass is at least fifteen (15) inches long.
- (h) An individual must not take or possess a largemouth bass from Harden Lake in Parke County unless the largemouth bass is at least sixteen (16) inches long.
- (i) An individual must not take or possess more than two (2) largemouth bass per day, and an individual must not take or possess a largemouth bass unless the largemouth bass is at least eighteen (18) inches long from the following designated waters:
  - (1) Tri-County State Fish and Wildlife Area.
  - (2) Robinson Lake in Whitley County and Kosciusko County.
  - (3) Ball Lake in Steuben County.
  - (4) Gibson Lake in Gibson County.
  - (5) Loon Pit at Blue Grass Fish and Wildlife Area in Warrick County.
  - (6) Bluegrass Pit at Blue Grass Fish and Wildlife Area in Warrick County.
  - (7) J. C. Murphey Lake at Willow Slough Fish and Wildlife Area in Newton County.

**(j) An individual must not take or possess a largemouth bass unless the largemouth bass is longer n ten (10) inches and less than fourteen (14) inches in length from Big Lake and Crane Lake in Noble County.**

~~(k)~~ **(k) An individual must not take or possess ~~more than five (5)~~ a black bass in aggregate per day unless that bass is less than twelve (12) inches long or more than fifteen (15) inches long with not more than two (2) per day being taken that are longer than fifteen (15) inches from the following designated waters:**

~~(1) Blue River located in Crawford, Harrison, and Washington counties. Each black bass taken from the Blue River in Crawford, Harrison, and Washington counties must be less than twelve (12) inches long or more than fifteen (15) inches long but not more than two (2) per day can be taken that are longer than fifteen inches.~~

**(2) West Fork of the White River located in Randolph, Delaware, Madison, Hamilton, Marion and Morgan Counties;**

**(3) West Fork of the Whitewater River and the East Fork of the Whitewater River from the junction with the West Fork of the Whitewater River to the Brookville Lake dam (also known as the tailwater), and the main stem of the Whitewater River from the east and west forks to the state line located in Randolph, Wayne, Fayette, Franklin, and Dearborn Counties;**

**(4) Flatrock River located in Henry, Rush, Decatur, Shelby, and Bartholomew Counties;**

**(5) Big Blue River and Driftwood River located in Henry, Rush, Hancock, Shelby, Johnson, and Bartholomew Counties;**

**(6) Tippecanoe River located in Tippecanoe, White, Carroll, Pulaski, Starke, Fulton, Marshall, and Kosciusko Counties to the water level control structure at Lake Tippecanoe;**

**(7) Eel River located in Cass, Miami and Wabash Counties;**

**(8) St. Joseph River located in St. Joseph and Elkhart counties;**

**(9) Pigeon River and Pigeon Creek located in LaGrange and Steuben counties from the Indiana - Michigan Stateline upstream to the outlet of Hogback Lake;**

**(10) Elkhart River located in Elkhart County from the confluence of the St. Joseph River upstream to the Goshen Dam in Goshen, Indiana.**

~~(k)~~ **(l)** An individual may take or possess not more than one (1) black bass from Sugar Creek located in Parke, Montgomery, Boone, Clinton, and Tipton counties per day and the black bass must be at least twenty (20) inches long.

~~(h)~~ **(m)** If this section prohibits an individual from taking or possessing a black bass from a specified water of the state, an individual must not possess a black bass of the prohibited class on or adjacent to the specified water of the state. (*Natural Resources Commission; 312 IAC 9-7-6; filed May 12, 1997, 10:00 a.m.: 20 IR 2718; filed May 28, 1998, 5:14 p.m.: 21 IR 3721; filed Dec 26, 2001, 2:40 p.m.: 25 IR 1539; readopted filed Jul 28, 2003, 12:00 p.m.: 27 IR 286; filed Sep 23, 2004, 3:00 p.m.: 28 IR 549; filed Feb 27, 2007, 2:25 p.m.: 20070328-IR-312060262FRA; readopted filed Nov 24, 2008, 11:08 a.m.: 20081210-IR-312080672RFA; filed Jul 6, 2010, 1:55 p.m.: 20100804-IR-312090616FRA*)